

The best ways to share your holiday photos

PERSONAL TECH > A7



I'm voting for Edgar

A first-time Hall of Fame voter's ballot

SPORTS > C1

How much do you spend in Downtown Seattle?

FYI GUY > B1

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2017

MOSTLY SUNNY
High, 36. Low, 28. > B8
seattletimes.com/weather

The Seattle Times

WINNER OF 10 PULITZER PRIZES

$1.50

INDEPENDENT AND LOCALLY OWNED FOR MORE THAN 121 YEARS

SEATTLETIMES.COM

Many were touched by the story of a severely disabled Federal Way man and the blind grandmother who felt called by God to care for him.



ALAN BERNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Nicholas Homblette's grandmother and longtime caregiver Georgenne Harvey (holding her dog, Ares) and Melody Stewart, Nicholas' mother, are mourning the young man whose story inspired thousands. Nick, who doctors doubted would live into adulthood, died Nov. 29 at age 27.

A HARD, INSPIRING LIFE 'SURROUNDED BY LOVE'

By DAHLIA BAZZAZ
Seattle Times staff reporter

When Nicholas Homblette was in the hospital with bacterial pneumonia last year, he spent his 27th birthday surrounded by family, eating chocolate peanut-butter ice cream cake — the same way he'd spent every birthday.

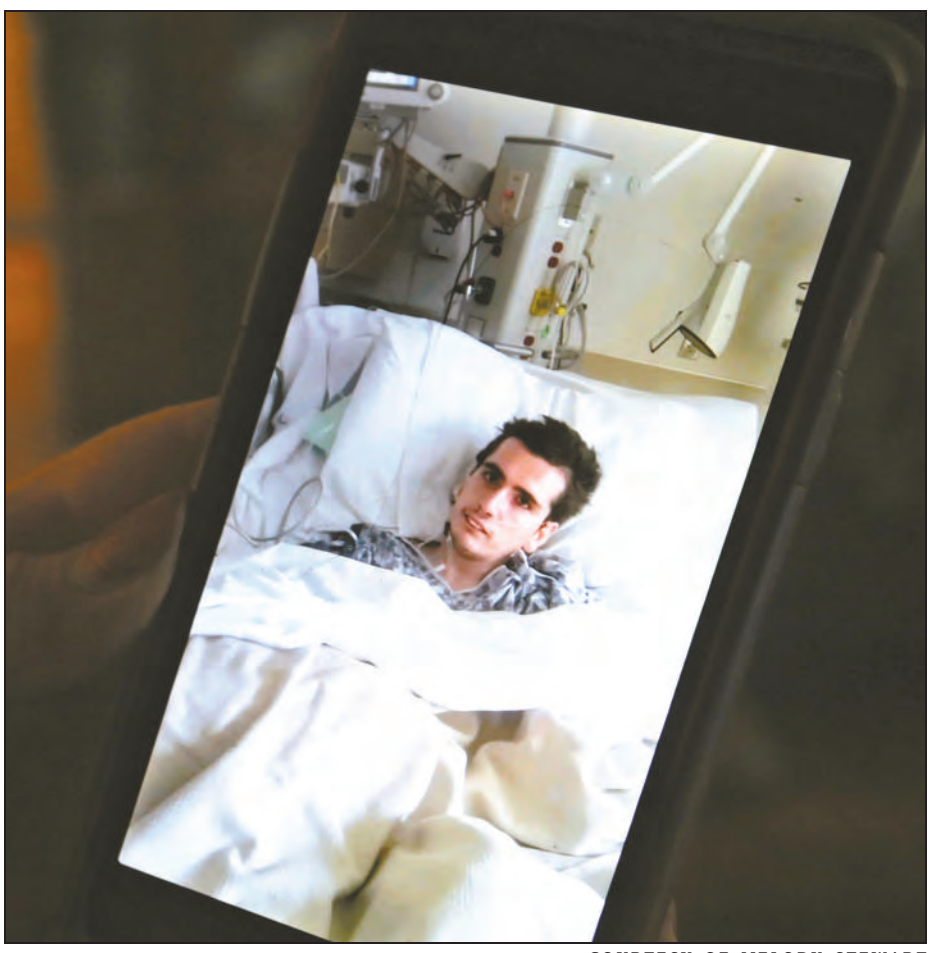
Saturday, the date of his cremation, would have been his 28th. But his family will still buy a cake and honor him — a resilient man with cerebral palsy, raised by his blind grandmother, who inspired thousands of people around the country with his story.

In many ways, it's a love story — the story of familial and community bonds that kept him alive for nearly all of his three decades before he died on Nov. 29.

"He was my life," said his grandmother, Georgenne Harvey. "The first time I held him, he reached up and touched my cheek. It was like he was saying, 'Here I am, Grandma!' "

Portraits on the walls of his childhood home in Federal Way show a pale, slim-faced boy with calm, brown eyes and striking eyebrows. He liked to play with miniature firetrucks and light-up toys. Sometimes one of Nick's favorite caregivers would prop up his tablet and help him play

See > HOMBLETTE, A4



COURTESY OF MELODY STEWART

Nicholas Homblette, seen recently in his hospital bed. Diagnosed with cerebral palsy at a young age, he was raised by his blind grandmother.

911 calls capture chaos of I-5 crash

AMTRAK DERAILMENT

Dispatchers hear from stunned witnesses, scramble to send help

By LEWIS KAMB
Seattle Times staff reporter

The woman's voice carried the urgency of sudden tragedy during the 2 minute, 10 second, call placed shortly after 7:30 a.m. Monday.

"An Amtrak train fell off the I-5 overpass," she implored to the dispatcher fielding her call. "The train is hanging off the overpass, it's landed on vehicles and there's people like ... there's, there's, there's bodies laying everywhere."

"How many patients are there do you think?" the dispatcher asked her.

"How many patients are there?" the woman called out.

Garbled voices shouted somewhere in the distance.

"I see one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10 — probably a dozen," she said. "And there's cars underneath the train."

Audio recordings of the emergency calls placed after Amtrak Cascades Train 501 jumped the tracks north of Olympia on Monday, crashing into a wooded embankment and onto Interstate 5 during the morning rush hour, captured the chaos and confu-

See > AMTRAK, A5

ON THE WEB

'Just send everything'
To hear the 911 recordings, go to: *seattletimes.com*

Trump keeps promise, signs major tax bill

LAST-MINUTE CEREMONY

President: TV networks' questions about timing prompted 'rush job'

By EILEEN SULLIVAN AND MICHAEL TACKETT
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump signed the most consequential tax legislation in three decades on Friday, even as he complained that he has not been given credit for his administration's accomplishments during a turbulent first year.

Trump decided against doing a formal signing ceremony early next year because television news networks questioned whether he would keep his promise to sign the legislation before Christmas.

Trump said he saw the coverage Friday morning and hastily called his staff to say that the legislation needed to be signed "now," prompting a last-minute Oval Office ceremony for the president's greatest achievement in his first year in office.

"We did a rush job today," Trump said at the bill signing.

See > TAXES, A5

New U.N. sanctions tighten grip on North Korea

CHINA, RUSSIA BACK MOVE

Economic pressure aims to force nation to reverse nuclear-weapons program

By RICK GLADSTONE AND DAVID E. SANGER
The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations Security Council placed new sanctions on North Korea on Friday that significantly choke off fuel supplies and order North Koreans working overseas to return home, in what may prove the last test of whether any amount of economic pressure can force the isolated country to reverse course on its nuclear-weapons program.

The sanctions, proposed by the United States and adopted by a vote of 15-0, were the third imposed this year in an escalating effort to force the North into negotiations. China and Russia joined in the vote, in a striking display of unity, but only after the Trump administration agreed to soften a couple of provisions.

Under the new sanctions, North Korea's imports of refined petroleum will be cut by 89 percent, exacerbating fuel shortages. North Korean laborers who work in other countries, a key source of hard currency, will be expelled. Nations will be urged to inspect all North Korean shipping and halt ship-to-ship transfers of fuel, which the North has used to evade sanctions.

But the resolution does not permit countries to hail or board North Korean ships in international waters, which the Trump administration proposed in September. That would be the most Draconian measure, because it would enable the U.S. Navy and its Pacific allies to create a cordon around the country, though Pentagon officials say it would also carry a high risk of triggering a firefight between North Korea and foreign navies.

The new sanctions are the toughest ever, but so were the last two rounds: In August, the Security Council blocked North Korean

See > SANCTIONS, A6

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